leges and modilities for their introduction.

Strategy for improving the Quality of vocational education

1437. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to evolve any multi-pronged strategy for improving the quality of vocational education in the Country during the Eighth Plan;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) how, Government propose to implement the strategy successfully throughout the Country?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) to (c) For improving the quality of the Vocational Education Programme the following multi-pronged strategy has been envisaged during the Eighth Plan:

(i) Emphasis on consolidation and strengthening of the Vocational courses already started through creation of effective management structure, teacher training, curriculum development and textbook preparation and educational-employment linkages. Expanion of the programme at the plus 2 level in the country will be gradual.

(ii) Provision of pre-vocational courses at the lower secondary stage (Class IX and X) for facilitating vocational education to students who may drop out after Class X and for orientation of those joining the vocational stream at the plus 2 level.

(iii) Establishment of the Central Institute of Vocational Education as an apex level research and development institution for providing academic and technical support to the Vocational Education Programme.

Joint Council on vocational education

1438. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a Joint Council of Central and State Governments on Vocational education was set up in the year 1990;

(d fi so, what are the details thereof;

(c) whether the said Council has submitted any report/recommendations to Government on policy planning of vocational education in the country; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof and what action Government have taken to implement the suggestions/recommendations of the Joint Council?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) and (b) A Joint Council of Vocational Education (JCVE) has been set up in 1990 under the Chairmanship of the Minister of Human Resource Development at the national level for coordination, policy, planning and review of vocational education programmes. The membership of the Council includes State Education Ministers, Members of Parliament, officials representing various Ministries/Departments in the Central and State Governments, representatives of voluntary organisations Employee's Organisations, All India level professional bodies Public Ssecor undertakings, Teacher's Training Technical Institutes, Regional Boards of Apprenticeship Training, educationists and others.

State Councils of Vocational Education have been envisaged as the counterpart of JCVE at the State level

for overall policy formulation and coordination of vocational education programmes.

(c) and (d) So far two meetings of JCVE have been held on 8-8-90 and 6-1-1993. Various important issues relating to vocational education were discussed in these meetings. The Council supported the multi-pronged action for improving the quality of vocational education during the 8th Plan.

Condition of Museums in the Country

1439. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item which appeared in the 'Times of India' dated the 18th January, 1993 regarding the poor conditions of the museums in the country; and

(b) if so, what measures have been taken by Government to remove the deficiences and improve the workings?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) and (b) The majority of the measures mentioned in the news-item are either private museums or State museums. In so far as the museums that are with the Central Government as far as possible, adequate care is being taken. A scheme is also in existence for financial assistance to private museums and museums under the various universities. In so far as state museums are concerned like Madras Museum, Mathura Museum etc., the State Governments are responsible for their upkeep and maintenance. In the Eighth Plan, a new scheme has also been introduced for setting up and maintenance of museums depicting regional and local culture.

Book Exhibitions

1440. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state the number of book exhibitions sponsored by Government and semi-Governmental agencies during the last threeyears together with the details in this regard and financial assistance extended for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): The major Government agency concerned with book publication is the Publications Division of the Information & Broadcasting Ministry and the principal semi-Government agency for Book Promotion is the National Book Trust. According to information furnished by Information & Broadcasting Ministry the Publications Division has not sponsored any book exhibition by other agencies during the last 3 years. As regards National Book Trust the Trust had sponsored 3 book Fairs/Festivals with financial implication of Rs. 2.17 lakhs and 210 Book Exhibitions with the financial implication of Rs. 7.64 lakh during the calender year 1990, 1991 and 1992.

Equal Opportunities of Education to the SC/ST Students

1441. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state the measures being taken by Government to remove the educational disparities and provide equal opportunities of education for the students of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): Some of the measures being taken by the Central and State Governments to remove educational disparities and provide equal opportunities of education for the students of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are: